

**To:** Myers, Craig[Myers.Craig@epa.gov]  
**From:** Ruhl, Christopher  
**Sent:** Sun 8/16/2015 12:16:33 AM  
**Subject:** Fwd: OSC.net GKM website

FYI. I will come over in a few to discuss.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Schaefer, Joe" <Schaefer.Joe@epa.gov>  
**Date:** August 15, 2015 at 6:03:28 PM MDT  
**To:** "EOC\_Deputy\_Manager," <EOC\_Deputy\_Manager@epa.gov>, "Ruhl, Christopher" <Ruhl.Christopher@epa.gov>  
**Cc:** "Woodyard, Josh" <Woodyard.Joshua@epa.gov>, "EOC\_Manager," <EOC\_Manager@epa.gov>, "Cheatham, Reggie" <cheatham.reggie@epa.gov>, "Tulis, Dana" <Tulis.Dana@epa.gov>, "Schlieger, Brian" <schlieger.brian@epa.gov>, "Burgo, Daniel" <Burgo.Daniel@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: OSC.net GKM website

Brian,

As per our conversation, we will switch the content to private since it has the same effect of removing the content from public view but preserves its use for the EPA personnel.

The profile section text of:

**"On August 5, 2015, an EPA team working to investigate and address contamination at the Gold King Mine in San Juan County, Colorado, unexpectedly triggered a large release of mine waste water into the upper portions of Cement Creek. Initial estimates are that the release contained approximately one million gallons of water that was held behind unconsolidated debris near an abandoned mine portal. There were several workers at the site at the time of the breach, all were unharmed.**

The latest updates and information on the response are available on EPA's Gold King Mine Website.

8/9/2015

This morning EPA is releasing a detailed data table of the sampling in Cement Creek and the upper portions of the Animas River from August 5, the date of the incident, and August 6.

EPA expects to have new data from August 7 which is currently undergoing review and will be

available to the public later today. We acknowledge frustration with the turnaround time for this information. Workers at the lab and data experts are working continuously to develop the information.

The data table contains a list of analyzed constituents, largely metals, and their numeric value in micrograms per liter, which is equal to parts per billion, or ppb.

The data table released today will include updates to the information released by EPA on August 7. The incident, which occurred on August 5, caused an increase in concentrations of total and dissolved metals as the contaminated mine water moved downstream. These concentrations began to trend toward pre-event conditions by August 6. August 7 and 8 data, when it is available, will inform whether the trend towards pre-event conditions continues.

Note: Total metals analysis for water samples includes the metals content both dissolved in the water and present in the particulates in the water. Typically a dissolved metals analysis of a water sample is performed by removing the particulates with a filter, then analyzing the filtered water for metals

#### 8/8/15 STATEMENT

EPA is committed to working closely with response agencies and state and local officials to ensure the safety of citizens, respond to concerns and to evaluate impact to water contaminated by the spill. EPA teams are deployed throughout the Animas River corridor collecting data.

EPA Region 8 is also in close coordination with Region 6 and Region 9 and the states of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Southern Ute Tribe and Navajo Nation.

EPA is sharing information as quickly as possible with the public as experts work to evaluate any effects the spill may have on drinking water, public health, agriculture, fish and wildlife. Regular updates on the response for the public and the media are scheduled throughout the weekend. The latest updates and information on the response are available on [EPA's Gold King Mine Website](#).

#### 8/8/15 Update:

- The first two days after the incident, the plume was moving at approximately 4 miles per hour. According to the EPA's ASPECT (Airborne Spectral Photometric Environmental Collection Technology) flyover, as of the morning of Aug 8th, the plume had reached the confluence of the San Juan River. As of 4:00 pm this afternoon, the plume had roughly reached Kirtland, New Mexico. The plume has been visually diluted and the leading edge of it is far less defined. The water is reported to be muddy with an orange tinge rather than solid orange.
- Sampling data from Cement Creek and the Animas River near Silverton from Aug. 5th and 6th show pH and metals concentrations are decreasing to pre-event conditions. We continue to monitor river conditions at multiple locations to detect trends. Rain events and variations in stream flows can cause the pH and metals concentrations to rise and fall.
- The data shows that pH (acidity) levels and dissolved metals in the Cement Creek and the upper portions of the Animas River spiked in the surface water at locations impacted by the contaminant plume. The data shows in the upstream locations the resident time of the plume in any one location was not long lasting. The trend downstream, in the Animas and San Juan Rivers, is expected to be similar or better than upstream, as the contaminant plume passes.
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) officials have been monitoring the effects of the spill on terrestrial and aquatic wildlife since the incident began. CPW is watching for any impacts on wildlife, whether they are acute or chronic. Fish are especially sensitive to changes in water

quality. CPW is also monitoring a control station on a clean tributary.

- Colorado Parks and Wildlife has indicated they are optimistic that the effects of the spill on terrestrial wildlife will be minimal.
- The water in Cement Creek and the Animas River in Silverton is clearing. The adit is still discharging approximately 500 gallons per minute and the trend is that flow is decreasing. The discharge is being diverted into the newly constructed ponds and treated before it enters Cement Creek. The treatment appears to be effective.
- A summary of pH and dissolved metals data is available here: <http://epaossc.org/goldkingmine>

#### NEXT STEPS

- Continue to treat drainage at mine site.
- Continue to sample the Animas River corridor
- Evaluate and publish data as it is finalized.
- Continue coordination with State, Federal, Tribal and local officials as well as community members, landowners/ water users.
- Continue to provide drinking water and water testing to private well owners.

### "

was replaced with

"All official information and data on the Gold King Mine Response is located at:  
[epa.gov/goldkingmine](http://epa.gov/goldkingmine)"

Dan Burgo switched all documents to Private.

I will proceed to switch all the images to private. There are 200 images and I have to do them individually so it will be awhile before its complete.

Joe Schaefer  
US EPA/Environmental Response Team  
(732) 906-6920 (office)  
(609) 865-8111 (cell)

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**From:** EOC\_Deputy\_Manager,  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 15, 2015 7:34 PM  
**To:** Schaefer, Joe; Ruhl, Christopher  
**Cc:** Woodyard, Josh; EOC\_Manager;; Cheatham, Reggie; EOC\_Deputy\_Manager;; Tulis, Dana; Schlieger, Brian  
**Subject:** [OSC.net](http://osc.net) GKM website

Joe, as discussed with Chris Ruhl please classify all documents and links associated with the website to Exclusive and post the following message and link to

front page of the website to direct the public to the [EPA.gov](http://EPA.gov) website. If you have any additional questions please contact me at the Dep EOC Email or give me a call on my cell at 202-322-9008. Thanks,

Brian

All official information and data on the Gold King Mine Response is located at:  
[epa.gov/goldkingmine](http://epa.gov/goldkingmine).